



Hayes Drumwright and Susana Cueva Drumwright. Photo by Julie Boucher.

Press Release

Introducing Vida Valiente Napa Valley Winery and Foundation

by [Vida Valiente Napa Valley Winery and Foundation](#)

NAPA VALLEY, Calif. (May 25, 2022) — With one eye on making stellar Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and the other on building bridges for first-generation low-income students, Vida Valiente has announced its debut as a St. Helena-based wine label and a philanthropic foundation that has already raised close to one million dollars in under a year.

Vida Valiente was founded by two Napa Valley wine families: Hayes Drumwright and Susana Cueva Drumwright, and Sam and Nancy Kaplan. “Vida Valiente represents the apex of our three most defining passions – wine, family and giving back,” said Susana. “We couldn’t be more thrilled to finally launch both the winery and the incredible scholarship foundation it will support, all at once with the release of our very first vintage.”

Vida Valiente's first release is a meticulously crafted 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon blend from acclaimed Napa Valley vineyards called The Movement™. The wine debuts at \$250 per 750ml bottle, and \$100 from each bottle sale of directly supports the Vida Valiente Foundation.

Vida Valiente translates to "Valiant Life," which is all about perseverance, resilience and the bravery it takes to be the first to navigate uncharted territory. The Vida Valiente Foundation was created by the Drumwrights and supports first-generation students who have worked hard to get themselves through school, but who could benefit from direct access to role models who grew up in similar low-income backgrounds.

The Vida Valiente Foundation is proud to name Stanford University as its first official collegiate partner. "We are excited to partner with the Vida Valiente Foundation," said Ron Diaz, Director of Student Awards at Stanford University. "They have already raised enough funds to commit to supporting 25 Stanford students for four full years – an impressive feat for such a young philanthropy. Many of these kids have overcome real hurdles to get into Stanford, so having a founder who comes from such a similar background is especially inspiring. We are grateful that Vida Valiente's support will ensure that our students' education can remain their primary focus for the duration of their well-earned time at Stanford."

Hayes, a prolific entrepreneur and philanthropist, is known in vinous circles as the co-founder of Memento Mori, a 100-point Napa Valley winery currently on its eleventh harvest. Sam is Memento Mori's talented winemaker as well as the founding winemaker at Howell Mountain's Arkenstone and at MAXEM, the Sonoma label he and Nancy founded.

Sam believes wines are made in the vineyard, where every terroir nuance imbues each grape with a unique sense of place. A natural fit for Vida Valiente, Sam is harvesting the virgin estate's first grapes in fall 2021 (for both The Movement™ and a single vineyard estate Cabernet).

Nestled at the base of Glass Mountain in St. Helena, Vida Valiente's most prominent feature is the high percentage of obsidian in its rocky Cortina soils, which produces wines of extraordinary tannic structure and length. Vines are farmed by Sam as well as viticulturist Jim Barbour, renowned for his impeccably managed vineyards throughout the Napa Valley.

Starting with the 2021 vintage, Vida Valiente's other three sources for The Movement™ include Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard in Oakville, High Ranch in Coombsville and another special, yet-to-be-announced St. Helena site.

The Vida Valiente team had been laying ambitious architectural plans for an estate winery on their flagship vineyard site, but much of it burned in the 2020's Glass Fire. Despite the significant losses, the founders decided to hold fast to their vision for The Movement™, forging ahead with the \$100 per bottle donation commitment despite their financial losses. With plans to rebuild their dream estate, they view their own perseverance as further inspiration for the Vida Valiente Foundation's scholars.

The founders of Vida Valiente all came from humble means, and credit great mentors for helping them achieve their successes. But it was Susana Cueva Drumwright's life experience that directly inspired the Vida Valiente mission. The first-generation daughter of immigrant parents, Susana's background makes her uniquely qualified to help identify the needs of the young adults the foundation will be supporting.

The scholars the Vida Valiente Foundation supports also have a great deal to overcome. 90% of first-generation low-income students in the United States take over six years to graduate. 33% drop out after three years. Between courses, jobs, a lack of a mentorship, and the daunting hurdle of leaving home for the first time, it is a wonder even 10% of these brave young adults make it.

With funds from The Movement™, the Vida Valiente Foundation is equipped to give these scholars the confidence, grace and skills to convert their proven work ethic into their own success stories. Through leadership, financial scholarships and annual retreats, the Foundation gives admitted college students unprecedented exposure to professionals who grew up in similar circumstances, all of whom have made brave moves and can open doors to what's possible.

"With self-sustaining funds from our incredible wines, our goal is to help 100 students in our first two years," said Hayes. "Long term, we hope to have thousands of graduates who actively provide leadership and opportunity to our scholars. Helping students overcome the odds while in college is just our first step. Sending empathetic leaders into the world who pay it forward through the Vida Valiente Foundation model is our ten to 20-year plan."

About Vida Valiente Winery

Vida Valiente is a family-owned and operated Napa Valley winery founded by philanthropists Hayes and Susana Drumwright and winemakers Sam and Nancy Kaplan. The winery debuted in late fall 2021 with its release of 2019 The Movement™ (SRP \$250), its flagship Cabernet Sauvignon blend. \$100 from each bottle is donated directly to support the Vida Valiente Foundation. Starting with the 2021 vintage, Vida Valiente wines will be sourced from the Vida Valiente estate vineyard in St. Helena, as well as Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard in Oakville, High Ranch in Coombsville and another St. Helena site (TBA). For more information on the Vida Valiente Winery or to join the mailing list for The Movement™, please visit vidavalientewinery.com.

About The Vida Valiente Foundation

Vida Valiente is all about perseverance, resilience, and the bravery it takes to be the first to into uncharted territory. The Vida Valiente Foundation was started by Napa Valley vintners and philanthropists Hayes and Susana Drumwright. It supports first-generation students who have worked hard to get themselves through school, but who could benefit from leadership from role models who grew up in similar low-income backgrounds. Funded primarily through proceeds from the founders' Vida Valiente Winery, the Vida Valiente Foundation gives admitted college students unprecedented exposure to professionals who grew up in similar circumstances, all of whom have made brave moves and can open doors to what's possible. To learn more about the Vida Valiente Foundation or to donate, please visit vidavalientefoundation.org.